191

Preface

101 In the area of scattered thickets and gallery forests /matas
133 de beira-rio/ of southern Mato Grosso there lives one of the
197 largest native groups in Brazil, the Terêna, of the Guaná fami-
161 ly and Aruak language. They number some 5,000 individuals, a very high figure for a Brazilian tribe, since most of them do not add up to a tenth of this.

463 Travelers on the Estrada de Ferro Noroeste do Brasil
[496] /Northwest Brazil Railroad/ that crosses the region can see them hoe in hand working on farm plots, on horseback tending the cattle of some fazendeiro, in the maintenance gangs of the railroad itself, or, more rarely, selling carandá palm fans at the stations.

177 It is difficult to identify them as Indians, since they dress, wear their hair, work, and live like the poor inlanders
142 /sertanejos/ of the region. One or another of them will present
191 a revealing Mòngolian fold or the black, straight, stiff hair characteristic of the Indian and nearly all of them speak Portu-
162 guese with an odd accent. Yet even these traits fail to attract
171 much attention in a region where there are numerous Paraguayans and Bolivians with similar characteristics.

● 619 In order to find out whether they are natives, it is necessary to talk to them or listen to the local people, who are always prepared to identify them and to point out numerous negative peculiarities which, in their eyes, make them different and set them apart.

121 Indians of this sort, so little native, are not of interest
177 to the classical ethnologist, who is interested precisely in those untouched groups that best preserve the peculiarities of their
[114] traditional culture. For this very reason they have been the subject of very few studies. Yet they present as much, if not more interest than isolated tribes, because only their /10/ study will lead us to a better understanding of the process whereby tribal peoples are integrated into national societies and of

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121 177 how and why, as in the case of the Terêna, they resist merging into the regional population.

121 Studies of groups in an advanced stage of integration are also recommended for the contribution they can make to the handling of problems involving the survival of tribal populations. [114] [122] For this very reason, the Secção de Estudos of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios and the Museu de Índio operated by it, while we worked there with Eduardo Galvão and Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira, was devoted chiefly to this type of study. The present work is the fruit of this orientation and gives a measure of the contribution that ethnology can make in the formulation and execution of a scientifically oriented native policy that could open new and better living perspectives to the native populations of Brazil.

121 177 619 The theme of this study is an analysis of the explicative possibilities of this rare Brazilian instance of a tribe which traveled practically the full road of acculturation while retaining a considerable populational rise, reached a high degree of participation in regional life, but in spite of this remains differentiated, identifying itself and being identified as native.

121 177 101 The explicative value of the Terêna case is all the greater because the Terêna are divided into various subgroups that present several variants of the general conditions of interaction of tribal groups with the national society. While some of the subgroups enjoyed a certain state of isolation and relative autonomy, others were compelled to live next to tribes that spoke different languages and also had different cultures, or even impelled to settle for the condition of tenant farmers or colonos on private fazendas. [649] [792] Official aid on the part of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios, as well as the activities of missionaries, Protestant and Catholic, also operated in different degrees of intensity and continuity and in various ways from group to group, giving rise to variants of great explicative 121 interest. Thus, their study showed in what way the various 177 forces of compulsion that affected the process of the integration

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177 But we have heard of exceptions, and among these we may in-
562 clude Marechal Rondon, who had a Terêna grandmother;
563 Ricardo Franco de Almeida Serra, as comandante-geral of the Paraguayan border, lived for several years at Forte Coimbra with an Indian woman, very probably a Terêna, by whom he had children; and also, Visconde de Taunay, whose posthumously published memoirs tell how some of the best days of his life were those he spent at the time of the Paraguayan campaigns, with a Terêna Indian woman.

177 Through the last 150 years of interaction with our society,
619 /12/ the various Guaná groups melted together, and in our day there remains only one, the Terêna, who have come to gather all survivors of the tribe. Today they live as aldea Indians, fazenda Indians, city Indians, integrated into regional life as farm workers, as urban workers, sometimes as army reserve men, and even as voters. Ever less Indian. Ever more Brazilianized and, as such, at grips with the same social problems that confront the rural masses and the poorest urban populations of Mato Grosso. Yet differentiated from the average inlander and the common townsman through facing specific problems of adjustment that arise chiefly from the consciousness of a common tribal origin, from the loyalties that unite them, and from the awareness, perpetually sharpened by the regional population, that they are different.

114 I have devoted myself for several years to the study of
121 the process of acculturation of the native populations of Brazil and of the role played by the native matrices in the formation of our people. For this reason I followed with the greatest interest the research of Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira, and I was honored by the invitation to write the preface to his work. I do so with two-fold pleasure, first, in presenting an ethnologist who combines mastery and love of theory with an uncommon ability for direct observation in field research; secondly, because his book represents a significant contribution to one of the basic themes in Brazilian ethnology and is destined to

G 175 182 619 /35 cont./ It is plain that in spite of the fact that the Guaná group in question was in a marked state of disorganization, its members still kept relative independence as a group.

G 175 184 181 648 On the other hand, we must also take into account the existence of marked differences of a cultural order among the Guaná subgroups, differences which were evidently due to historico-social contingencies specific to each tribe in particular. The character or "bent" /índole/--to use an expression common among the chroniclers--of each Guaná group would have been to some degree responsible for the greater or lesser degree of their closeness to their Guaikurú allies and neighbors. This explains, in all probability, the more reserved attitude of the Terêna, not only in relation to the "whites" but also in relation to other tribal groups. About them no situation is known similar to those experienced by certain tribes such as the Exoaladi or the Kinikináu.

G 175 184 181 Regarding the former--the Exoaladi, already referred to above, in passages from Almeida Serra--, Labrador attests to their more bellicose characteristics than the others, when he says that they "are considered the most barbarous and restless in the entire nation."(45) And that this Guaná subtribe--Azara

45. 1910, II:256.

G M 175 648 131 M 563 adds--already in the mid-18th century was "incorporated with the Mbayá and lived with them east of the Paraguay River, on hills situated near the 21° parallel."(46) But even here, in a

46. 1809, II:88; cf. 1943:133.

G M 175 648 571 case of union between two distinct tribal groups, leadership in the new community of interests did not fail to obey the same rules recorded by the chroniclers. This may be deduced from M [563] [622] this other passage from Labrador: "There were many wild Echoaladi Indians, who were feudatories of Caminigo (a Guaikurú cacique--RCO).

[Traditional Culture]

/51 cont./ These ceremonies, which seem to have been a mixture of religious and secular rituals--such as the Oheokoti, to which we have already referred--have as their central figure the Koixomuneti or doctor-sorcerer, who, wielding a gourd rattle (Itaaká) and a tuft of feathers (Kipahê) invokes /52/ the spirits of the dead or Koipihapati and through them effects cures, pacifies the forces of nature, and performs all sorts of exorcisms. (86)

86. Although today the activity of the Koixomuneti is much more limited and his prestige much less, we can get an idea of his importance among the Guaná groups, especially among the Terêna, by studying certain myths, such as "Ivoióneti." (Cf. Altenfelder, 1949.)

The importance of these annual festivities to Terêna society--aside, of course, from their manifest function (87)--,

87. The concepts of manifest function and latent function are used here after Robert Merton (1951:61-64).

becomes clear when we analyze the role of that ceremonial complex in the maintenance of tribal solidarity and the strengthening of group consciousness, or, in other words, its latent function. The preparations made by the community are so intensive that they demand the participation of the

796 182 619 571 462 [114] [222] [223] 152 cont. / [Traditional Culture]

largest possible part of the local group and a harmonious and efficient division of labor. Thanks to the fortunate coincidence whereby Castelnau passed through a Terêna community, near Miranda, in May 1845, exactly during preparations for those festivities, we can evaluate the high significance to the group of their "national holiday." The chronicler writes that "for a month the men had searched the forest for honey with which all the families were now busy preparing an alcoholic beverage, the soul of every festival." (88) Once the raw material had

88. 1949, II:303.

been gathered by the men, the job of preparing the drink fell to the women. Besides, by "all the houses women could be seen working at tasks of the most varied sort, but always for the same end." (89) And the function of these annual gatherings

796 182 619 571 [301] [302]

89. The chronicler goes on: "Some sew glass beads on pieces of striped cotton cloth, others cut and lay out the red feathers with which they make ornaments for the head; yet others sketch on their husbands' bodies delicate paintings, when they do not do this themselves." (1949, II:304.)

became very clear to us, in so far as they animate intratribal relations and preserve social solidarity, when we ascertained among the present-day Terêna that this is perhaps the only moment when the local groups manage to gather together all (or almost all) their members. Like the Oheokoti--which today coincides with Holy Week--, only the June festivals can gather the local group together, owing to the great spatial mobility

[Traditional Culture]

/52 cont./ of the present-day Terêna. As we shall see in Chapter VII, in spite of the /53/ socio-cultural variations we shall find among the Terêna population (Chap. VI), the power of attraction of these ceremonies is such that it leads to the withdrawal of the Terêna population from all labor, whether on the fazendas, in the towns or cities of the region, or even in their own aldeas that promote the festivals, where their activities are limited to those preparations.

For now, it is sufficient if we accept the idea that traditional Terêna-Guaná religious behavior is characterized, in its basic lines, by its compliance to a pattern peculiar to the Chaco culture area. (90) Incidentally, this is not limited to

90. "The cerimonial life of the "Tereno" and probably of all "Guaná" also was particularly intense when the new year began. It is difficult to ascertain wheter these Indians adopted the "Mbya" rites and added a few traditional elements of their own, or whether cerimonies already present in their own earlier culture corresponded to the Pleiades feast of the "Mbaya" (Metraux, 1946:357). /Cited in English./

religion, but may be extended to mythology. In this respect, Baldus comments that the Terêna mythological complex, today changed into a body of legends, clearly proves its Chaco origin, and he also points out as significant the fact that the Handbook of South American Indians includes that group in the Chaco tribes. (91)

91. 1950:217.

/73 cont./

361 their lands and drawing them into the colônias of the fazendas.
178 The history of interethnic relations records that a large number
648 of aldeas disappeared in the past, leading their members to
[166] attach themselves to fazendas or to remain as a mobile unit,
moving from fazendas to settlements and cities, and vice versa,
128 immersed in a continuous process of detribalization. In this
chapter and in the following one we shall deal only with the
situation of the Terêna aldea population; the one that now lives
in relatively independent and stable communities, whether or
not they are under the supervision of the Serviço de Proteção
aos Índios.

361 By municípios, we can note the following: Município of
[103] Miranda: Cachoeirinha, Passarinho, Moreira, União, and
Lalima; Aquidauana Município: Bananal, Ipegue, Limão Verde,
and Aldeinha; Nioac Município: Brejão; Sidrolândia Município:
[162] Buriti; Dourados Município: Francisco Horta. Beside these 12
communities, which will be the subject of ecological char-
acterization in the present chapter, we might point out two
other communities which are totally or partially made up of
[103] Terêna Indians. One of them, São João, in the state of Mato
Grosso, and another, Araribá (Curt Nimuendajú Native Post) in
621 São Paulo. The former, São João, within the Kadiwéu reser-
162 vation was formed by introducing Terêna families into a distant
648 part of the fazenda /retiro/ on the bank of the Aquidavão River
and close to the Bodoquena mountain range, in order to insure
ownership of those lands through settlement. The latter,
Araribá aldea, occupied by Guarani Indians, in 1932 got a few
Terêna families (about 50 individuals) whose mission was to
prod the Guarani, by their example, to the agricultural work
162 of the reservation. Nevertheless, it cannot be stated that these
are the only Terêna clusters, since a relatively high percentage
of families are still scattered among the fazendas, probably
living in their colônias, mixed in with neo-Brazilian colonos.
[177] Such families, in spite of being quite disorganized--in terms
[619] of the /74/ traditonal patterns--, still continue to regard
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162 themselves as members of an indigenous group as long as they
619 can identify their relatives who live in aldeas, and visit them
574 at the time of the "national holidays" of the tribe. But the
128 situation of these families, along with that of those who live in the cities, will be examined in Chapter VII, when we shall study Terêna mobility as a factor of economic integration and as a function of the assimilation process.

We shall now endeavor to give an idea of each of the 12 aldeas visited, focusing on an ecological point-of-view, while--in the next chapter--we shall analyze their socio-cultural structures.

Cachoeirinha

361 Cachoeirinha is an aldea situated three and a half leagues from the city of Miranda and eight kilometers from the neo-Brazilian settlement of Duque Estrada, a small station of the
162 Noroeste do Brasil railroad. The regional census carried out by the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios in 1954, gave that aldea 834 inhabitants. (137) And if we compare the successive

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137. In a previous work we examined Cachoeirinha in greater detail, making use of demographic data gathered by us in 1957 in the field. We abstain from using them here so as not to impair the comparative analysis with the other Terêna communities, since for the latter we merely have census data up to 1954. (Cf. R. C. Oliveira, 1958 (b).

/96 cont./ [Francisco Horta]

Among the agents of culture change of the Terêna and Kaiwá communities, we note the Francisco Horta Native Post, built in 1924-25, along with its school, whose teacher is now a woman missionary from the neighboring "Missão Evangélica Caiuá"; the Protestant mission itself, with its well-equipped infirmary, nursery for orphan children, church, and school, all of these annexes being situated on a land plot next to the entrance of the reservation; several "bolichos" situated on the chief ways of access to the aldea; the fazendas of the region, characterized by the maté industry, with Paraguayans and Kaiwá Indians from Francisco Horta /97/ working on its extraction; and naturally, the city of Dourados, which is only five kilometers away.

As a result of the persistent work of the missionaries, nearly all of the Terêna community call themselves Protestants. On the other hand, the infrequent visits of the Catholic padres of Dourados to the reservation are not sufficient to attract the Kaiwá, whose religious vitality, so well analyzed by Schaden (155)

155. Cf. Egon Schaden, 1954:159-170.

keeps them attached to their own traditions. And as a result of the Protestant proselytism, one notes in Francisco Horta--as in the other indigenous communities where "Believers" have settled--a certain social tension, manifested in the discrimination of non-Protestant individuals toward those who call themselves "Believers," whether Terêna or Kaiwá Indians. From what we were able to ascertain during our stay at the mission--where we were for five days--, the religious bonds were stronger among the Terêna and Kaiwá than the tribal bonds; that is, all of the "Believers," without consideration of tribal or ethnic origin, were united against those who did not profess the same creed.

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/121/ in accordance with Glaser (1958:34), according to whom "the pure assimilated person is an ideal-typical conception formed by extrapolating our continuum to its extreme, but rarely encountered empirically... /cited in English/." And Glaser concludes with the admonition that "by the standard sociological definitions of assimilation, a person is not fully assimilated if he is conscious of trying to be assimilated: in the latter case, we would consider him desegregating" (p. 32). /Cited in English./

assimilation, like acculturation, /112/ can also mean a "condition" as opposed to a "process"; in this case, the context in which they appear will suffice to elucidate them as a dynamic category (process) or a static one (condition), as we see in these respective examples: "assimilation--or acculturation--has led the Terêna groups to a radical change in their behavior...," and "not yet assimilated--or sufficiently acculturated--, the Terêna remain a people with a tribal consciousness strong enough to differentiate them from the regional population and to prevent their classification as a national variant or subculture...."

[177] [619]

We deem it fitting to underscore here this difference between the concepts of assimilation and acculturation--as "process" and as "condition"--in order to overcome an obvious ambiguity which incidentally has already been pointed out by Ralph Beals. (173)

173. 1953:627-628.

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Campo Grande. All of them were characterized by their great age, especially João Grande, perhaps the oldest of all, who died in 1957 at the age of approximately 100.

that the name Oheokoti is given at the present day.

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Although these ceremonies still take place in all of the Terêna communities, they seem to have been much modified in their internal structures. They now present intrusive Catholic and spiritualist elements, which make them a living example of religious syncretism: the Koixomuneti call themselves Catholics, wear medals and hang pictures of saints on the walls of their "ranchos," while at the same time their practices show spiritualist influences, due to the contact they maintain with the so-called "low spiritualism" of the cities. It is frequently heard that "spiritualism is getting into the aldea" and that the present Koixomuneti "are not as good as the old ones." In short, it can be said that in spite of all the modifications undergone by the Oheokoti--or perhaps, due to the same, since they made him more flexible--, he continues to survive and to fulfill his integrating function, or, in other /118/ words, as we already said, to foster tribal solidarity and strengthen the ethnic consciousness of all of the Terêna local groups, succeeding in attracting even the individuals who live in the cities.

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This flexibility shown by the Oheokoti had no parallel in the traditional social structure. This is the reason why the latter broke down, without resisting the changes operating in the regional scene, when the Terêna communities were compelled to resist the expanding front of Brazilian society. As we saw in Chapter III--and as we are merely recalling here--, the extraordinary rigidity of Guaná-Terêna social structure, made up of the combination of a three-fold asymmetrical

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178 571 [60] [582] structure over a two-fold, symmetrical one, could not survive after the dispersal of the Terêna and the resulting disorganization of the local groups. We should also add to this the kinship system itself, which, thanks to the unity of the "sibling" group, made even much more difficult the survival of the tribal organization, insofar as it reduced considerably the marriage possibilities, already so limited by the strata. In the face of this, it can be said that such a structure is rigid, as opposed to the flexible type mentioned by the members of the Seminar on Acculturation when they refer to the possibility of a typological differentiation of the internal structures of cultural systems. (188)

188. Social Science Research Council, 1954:976-977.

177 571 The counterpart of the disappearance of the old social structure was the adoption of an associative system, still vague, but which emerged from the neo-Brazilian communities that formed along the paths of the pioneering settlers. Monogamy, the nuclear family as a dwelling unit, greater freedom in the choice of a spouse, and the compadrío system, for example, were cultural complexes incorporated into the tribal culture that transformed completely the traditional way of life. But 178 571 619 not even by this did the Terêna lose their "tribal consciousness," even though it had been traumatized by the breakdown of the old infra-structure and by its dislocation from the old value system, its religion, and its mythology. At least those Terêna who remained in their aldeas, or who reorganized into relatively autonomous communities (such as those of group (b) had land on which to live and to cultivate, and as a result could have a group life and thus keep alive /119/ the "tribal we" and postpone indefinitely their assimilation into Brazilian society.

/123 cont./ To declare oneself a "Catholic" is
785 already a habit for the Terêna. And among all the Terêna I
771 have known, whether in the cities or in the aldeas, only one was connected with a Catholic association ("Liga Católica de Aquidauana"), his daughter belonging to the "União das Filhas de Maria" and his son-in-law being a "Congregado Mariano." But those who call themselves "Believers" tend to be connected with their church in larger number, owing to its greater demands, it being ever more exacting and taking up far more of the time of its members for the frequent services it promotes.

369 But how does this urbanized population earn its keep?
463 In their majority, i.e., 75 per cent in Campo Grande and in Miranda, and 90 per cent in Aquidauana, these Indians are connected with jobs of an urban nature, among which we might point out hotel employee (male cook, dishwasher, cleaning man), construction worker (stone mason, painter, and assistants), and domestic workers (female cook, laundress, dishwasher). There are also barbers, shoemakers, employees of the Noroeste do Brasil /railroad/, as well as cases of hand laborers for the prefecture (day laborers), street sweepers, office assistants, bakers, doormen in movie houses and school houses, to cite only some of the occupational categories they fill. In terms of rural occupations, we have agricultural day labor, which represents the work most sought out by those who did not manage to get a "job in the city" even though they live there.
[465] Usually they work on fazendas or farms close to the city, earning salaries below /124/ average as compared with their compatriots connected with urban activities.

369 Such is, in synthesis, the situation of the Terêna who
619 live in cities. Even though they lead a life quite different from that of their aldea brethren, (195) the urbanized Terêna

195. The only group that bears some similarity to these urbanized Terêna is that of Aldeinha, owing to

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369 the fact that its members are almost as closely connected to the city of Aquidauana as those who live there. The division we have made follows a methodological criterion whereby the Aldeinha community could be studied, as it actually was, in the chapter devoted to the aldeas, while yet underscoring its peculiar character.

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369 do not, on this account, fail to continue Terêna, i.e., to remain faithful to their ethnic origin and, to some extent, to their local group. The loss of their ethnic identification, along with their dissociation from the local group, begins in the generations following those of the emigrant Indians and obeys certain mechanisms. Assimilation seems to become possible only in special cases, out of a conjunction of factors such as the length of stay in the urban area, with its reflexes in later generations, the resulting interethnic marriages and cross-breeding, but above all, the greater or lesser family disorganization, with its decisive influence on the adjustment of the first and second generations in the urban-national structure. It should be noted that we are speaking of the assimilation of the generations following that of the Terêna who emigrated from their aldeas, and not of the emigrant who continues (i) to identify with his aldea of origin or his local group, (ii) to maintain land plots there, and (iii) to return there at the time of secular festivities or of magico-religious rituals reminiscent of the old Oheokoti. The barriers that obliterated the roads of assimilation of these emigrant Terêna will be examined in the final chapter of this work.

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177 369 585 511 goes on to sell its labor at a better price is not sufficient, for both needs and expenses increase considerably, to the point that it does not pay to leave the aldeas for merely economic reasons. (210) This population is obviously prevented from

210. We saw elsewhere (Cf. 1 and 2, pp. 185-190, that there were also other forces working to attract the Terêna to the city and how they--the forces--were not sufficient to hold them there. As for the fazendas, as a place to live and to work, they do not, and indeed never did, exert attraction on the aldea or even the urbanized Terêna; if this "Terêna fazenda population" exists today, this is due to the successive political and military struggles in which the region was involved, from the Paraguayan war, leading the Terêna population to compulsory enlistment on the fazendas, at a time when native reservations had not yet been set up: this population is made up at present of survivors of the local groups scattered earlier that did not return to aldeas reorganized later. Nevertheless, this population is still identified

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as belonging to a specific ethnic group, as proved by the ease with which its members were identified by our informants in Aldeinha, when they gave us the total of the Terêna population living on the fazendas of the município of Aquidauana. (Cf. p. 174-176.) This, however, does not exclude assimilation into the rural neo-Brazilian population, of successive generations of interethnic mestizos, through the fazendas, which always functioned as agencies of culture change.

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*177 enjoying all of the advantages heralded by urban life; joining
369 the national system of stratification, the detribalized Terêna
565 begin to face those same difficulties that are common to the
[563] poorer classes of the regional population. If we add "class
[571] barriers" to "ethnic barriers," the result is a limitation of associative life so as to reduce to an extraordinary degree their field of operation in the national society (rural or urban) and deters their assimilation.

[361] The most important consequence of the existence of these barriers is the precarious settlement in the cities and even on the fazendas of the great majority of the detribalized Terêna.

*177 A contributing factor to this, although we cannot specify to
369 what degree, are the difficulties that the Terêna meet in form-
582 ing families outside the aldeas. The reduction of the marriage
612 market, due to the lesser possibility of intra- or intertribal
563 marriage, leads the young Terêna male (more than the young girl) to seek his bride in the aldeas. On the one hand, due to the aspiration of the detribalized Terêna girls to marry a